image
ISSUE 1
SKOTTIE YOUNG
JORGE CORONA
JEAN-FRANCOIS BEAULIEU
NATE PIEKOS
The ME YOU LOVE in the DARK™
JORGE CORONA
2021

STORY
SKOTTIE YOUNG

ART
JORGE CORONA

COLORS
JEAN-FRANCOIS BEAULIEU

LETTERING
NATE PIEKOS OF BLAMBOT®

3D MODEL OF THE HOUSE
DAVID STOLL

COVER ART
JORGE CORONA

EDITORS
JOEL ENOS & KENT WAGENSCHUTZ

PRODUCTION ARTIST
DEANNA PHELPS

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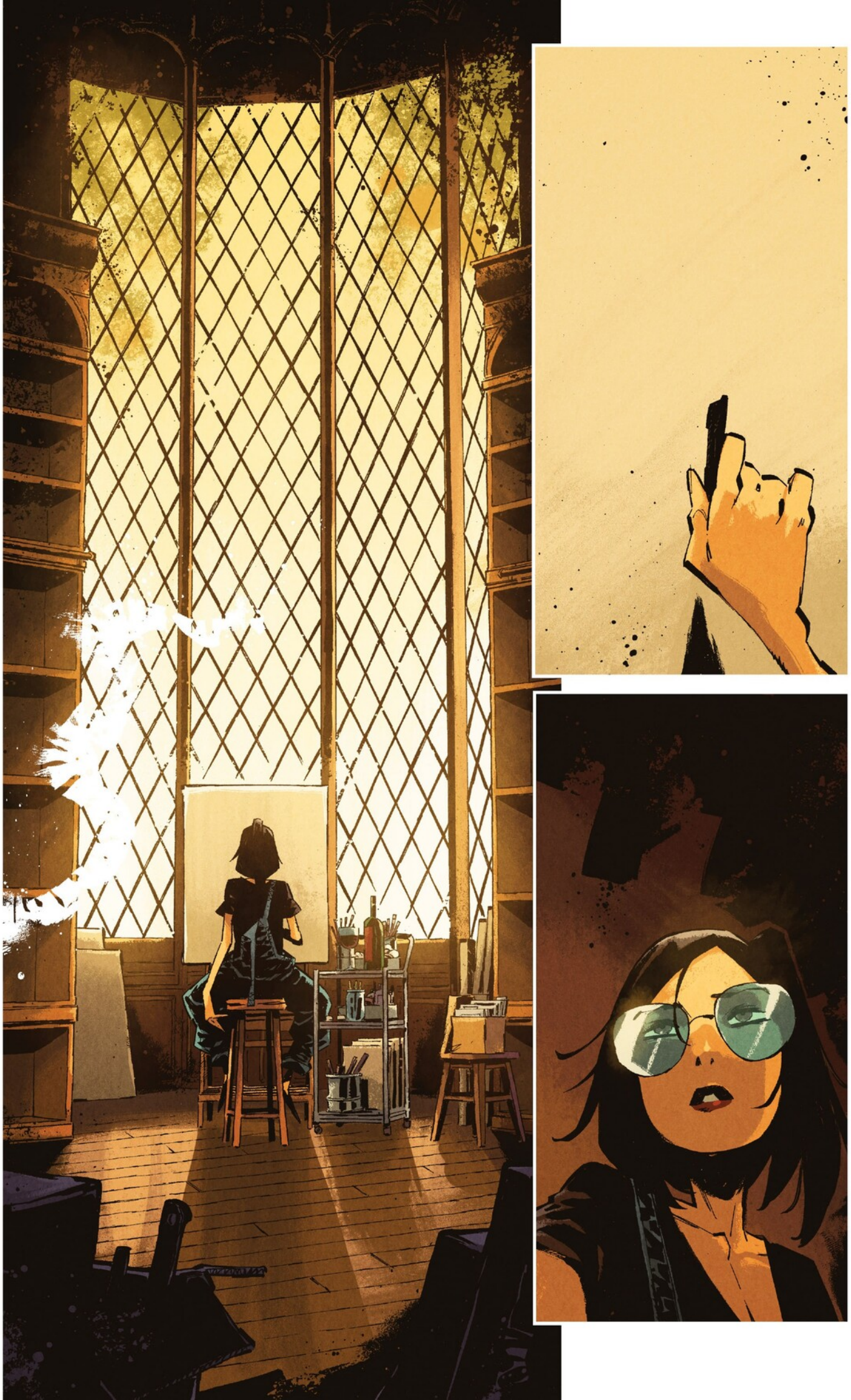
WHAT'S THE STORY WITH THIS ONE?
IT SAYS HERE THAT OVER THE YEARS SEVERAL OF ITS OWNERS HAVE...
...UM, YOU KNOW WHAT? I THINK WE SHOULD SKIP THIS ONE.
WHY? I THINK IT LOOKS PERFECT.
LISTEN, I DON'T REALLY BELIEVE IN GHOSTS AND ALL THAT, BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF STORIES ABOUT THIS PLACE BEING HAUNTED-- WHATEVER THAT MEANS.
AND LOOK, YOU'RE JUST RENTING ANYWAY, RIGHT? TO PAINT, YOU SAID?
THIS IS TOO MUCH HOUSE TO KEEP UP WITH. I HAVE SMALLER, NEWER PLACES WHERE YOU CAN JUST FOCUS ON--
THANK YOU, BUT HAUNTED OR NOT...

IT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR.
The ME YOU LOVE in the DARK

WEEKS LATER.
HEY, GHOST. IF YOU'RE REAL, THEN I WOULD APPRECIATE SOME HELP WITH UNPACKING. OR MAYBE JUST HANG A PICTURE OR TWO.
MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL, YOU KNOW?



NO.

UGH! COME ON. JUST DRAW!

MAYBE TOMORROW.

YOU KNOW, YOU COULD AT LEAST START THE RECORD AND POUR MY WINE FOR ME.

AND IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DO THAT, AT LEAST GIVE ME SOME INSPIRATION OR SOMETHING.

WHAT GOOD IS A HAUNTED HOUSE IF IT DOESN'T GIVE YOU ANY QUALITY *HAUNTING?!*

REALLY, RO? WEEKS OF THIS AND YOU HAVE NOTHING?
AND *YOU*...
...YOU'RE NO FUN, GHOST.
GOOD-NIGHT.

WHAT THE...?

WHAT? RO, YOU MIGHT BE DRINKING TOO MUCH, GIRL.
I SWEAR I TURNED THE RECORD PLAYER OFF AND CLEANED UP LAST NIGHT...

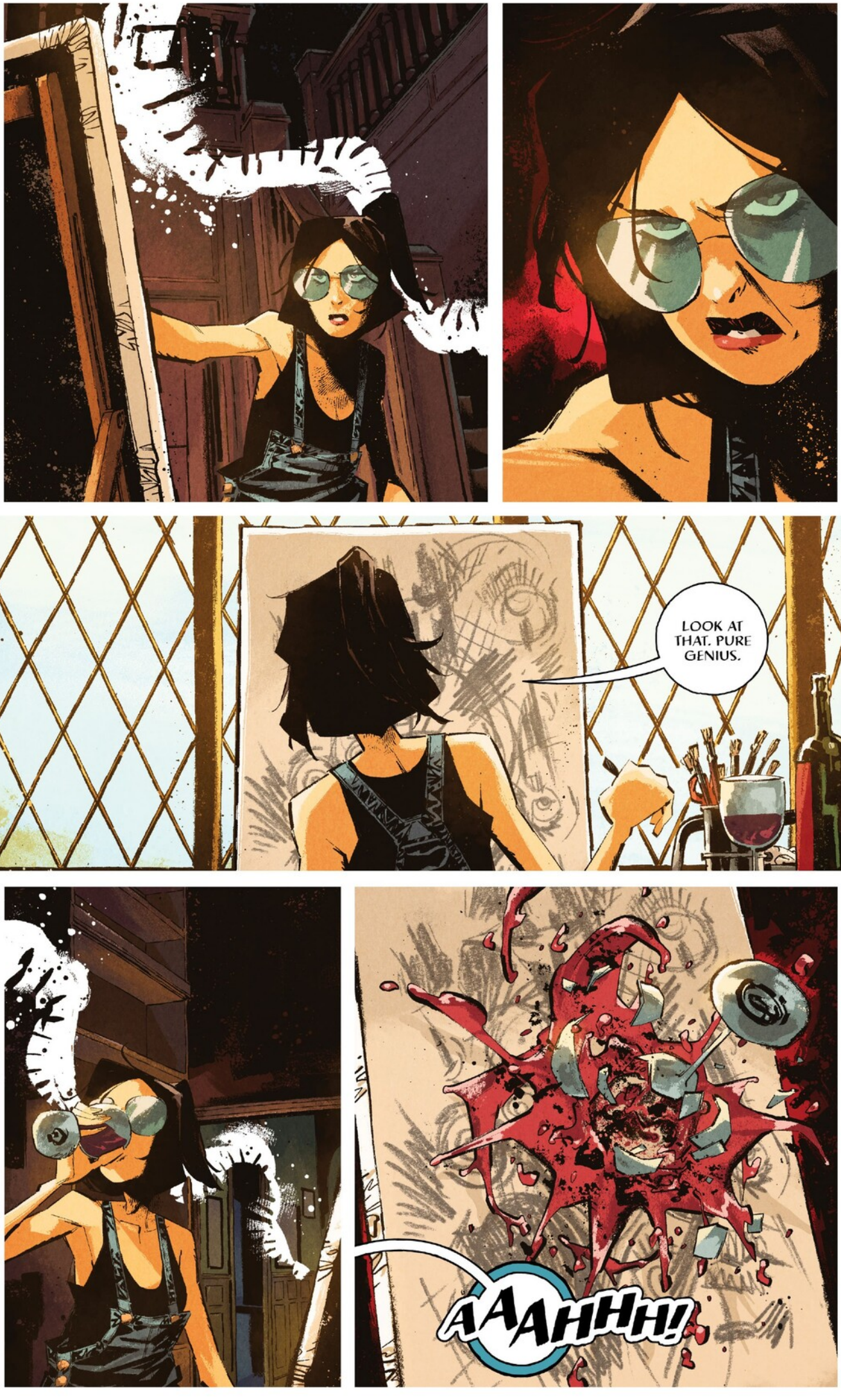
AAAHHH! DAMMIT!
BZZZ BZZ BZZZZ

HELLO!

WHOA! DID I CATCH YOU AT A BAD TIME?
OR WERE YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF A LITTLE ME TIME?
RO MEADOWS

UGH, I WISH. IN FACT, THAT'S A GREAT IDEA. I'M GOING TO GO TAKE CARE OF THAT RIGHT NOW! BYE!
DON'T YOU HANG UP ON ME, RO!
WHILE I WOULD LOVE TO CHAT MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU MIGHT DO WHEN YOU GET OFF THE PHONE, I'M MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN DOING DOWN THERE SINCE YOU LEFT.
UM, IT'S GOING WELL. GREAT, IN FACT. GETTING SO MUCH DONE.
UH-HUH. YOU SOUND SOOOO CONVINCING.
YOU'RE GOOD FOR NOW, GIRL. BUT DON'T MAKE ME REGRET LETTING YOU ESCAPE THE MIDWEST LIMBO TO "FIND YOUR NEW VOICE."
GET YOUR ASS PAINTING. EVERYONE IS WAITING FOR THE NEXT BIG RO MEADOWS SHOW!
AND YOUR BOY ATTI NEEDS TO KEEP PAYING THE RENT AT THIS GALLERY IF WE'RE GONNA KEEP THE DOORS OPEN LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE IT TO YOUR NEXT OPENING.
I KNOW I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO WORKING AT COFFEE SHOPS. DO YOU?
NO.

THEN YOU GOTTA SHOW ME SOMETHING, RO.
YEAH, I HEAR YOU.
ALL RIGHT, IT'S TIME TO START. YOU'VE DONE THIS A MILLION TIMES. JUST DRAW. MOVE YOUR HAND AND...
...DRAW.


LOOK AT THAT. PURE GENIUS.
AAAHHH!

WHY CAN'T YOU JUST DO WHAT YOU DO?!

YOU'RE SUCH A BIG-SHOT ARTIST!

SO TRY MAKING NOT SHITTY ART!

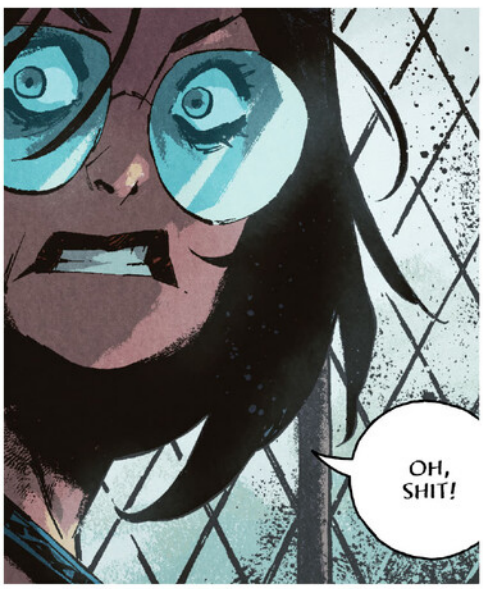
HAAA-HA-HA.
DID YOU SEE THAT, GHOST? IT'S THE NUMBER ONE LESSON IN LIFE: WHEN FACED WITH A CHALLENGE, THROW A TANTRUM LIKE A CHILD.
SOLVES EVERY-THING.

YOU KNOW, MAYBE GOING BACK TO THE COFFEE SHOP IS WHAT I NEED. I WAS HUNGRY THEN. I ***NEEDED*** TO ***EXPRESS*** MYSELF.

NOW, I'M JUST A SPOILED ***ARTEEST*** RENTING RIDICULOUS HOUSES IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, ***HOPING*** TO ***FIND*** MYSELF.
BUT IT'S NOT WORKING.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, GHOST? SHOULD I JUST PACK IT IN AND GO BACK TO BEING A BARISTA?

NO, YOU SHOULD NOT.


OH, SHIT!

OH-
SHIT-OH-
SHIT-OH-SHIT-
OH-SHIT-
OH-SHIT!
HA.
HAA-
HA-HA-
HAAA.
WHEN YOU START HEARING VOICES, IT'S PROBABLY TIME TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR A BIT...

...AND MAYBE CUT BACK ON THE WINE.
NICE TRY, GHOST. MAKING ME THINK YOU'RE ACTUALLY REAL...
NO WAY.

THIS IS CRAZY.
I'M SORRY

BUT ALSO...
I'M SORRY

I'M SORRY
...A LITTLE SWEET.

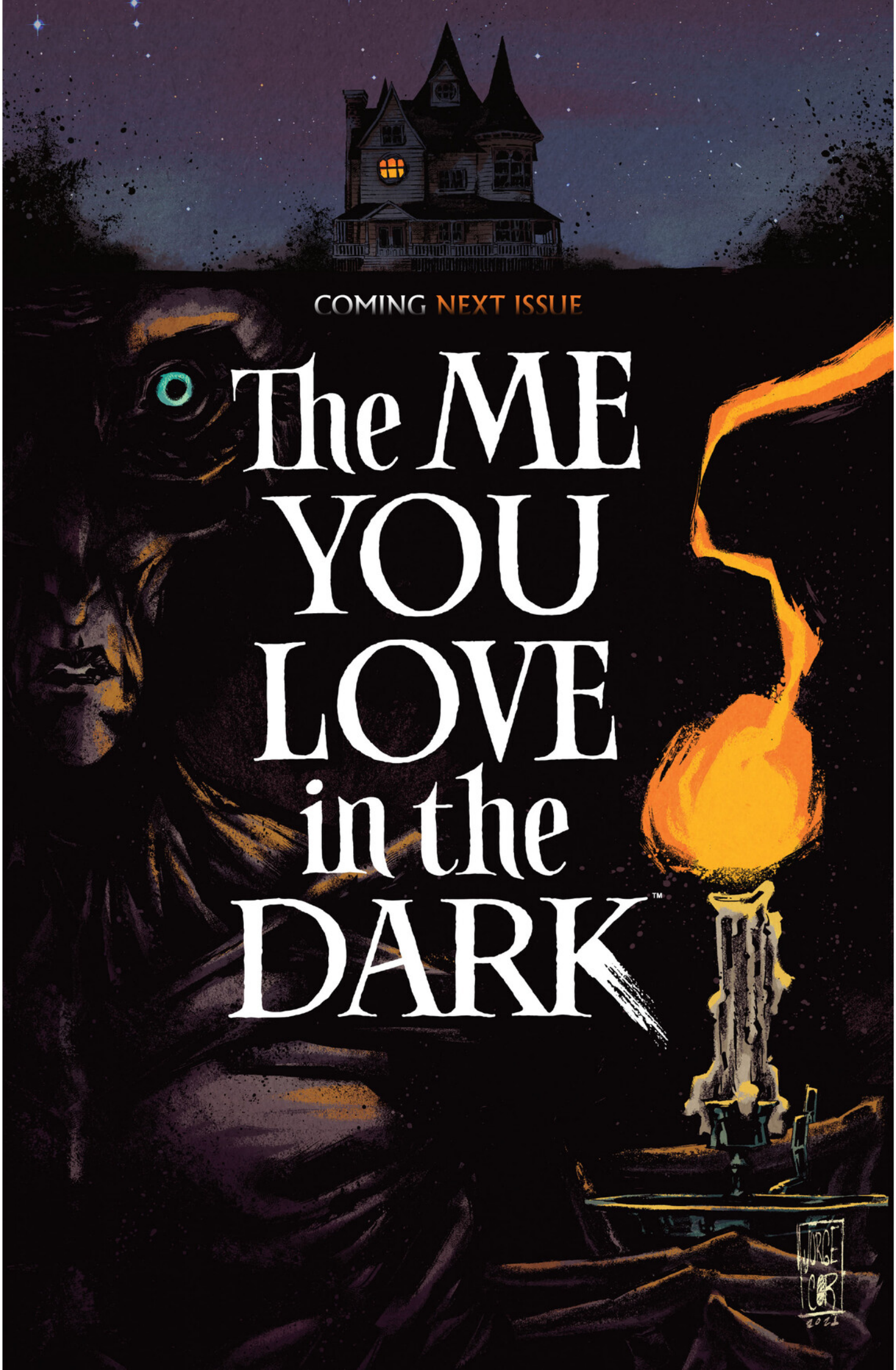
I'M LOSING MY MIND, RIGHT? THAT'S GOTTA BE IT.

TELL ME, GHOST, ARE YOU REAL OR AM I GOING MAD?

I'M NOT SURE WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE GOING MAD, BUT...

...I AM VERY REAL.

TO BE CONTINUED


COMING NEXT ISSUE
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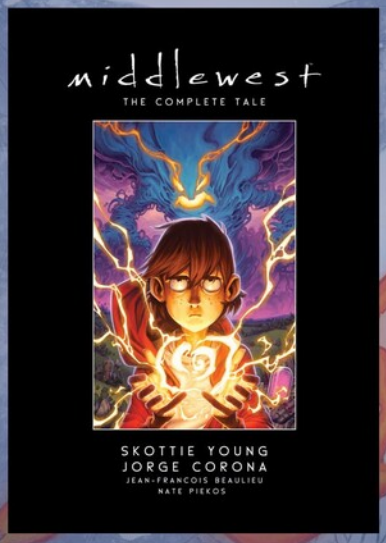
middlewest™

"An emotional gut punch I haven't felt since I KILL GIANTS!" —DONNY CATES



"Having your heart broke never looked so good."
—GERRY DUGGAN

"I've read a lot of comics in my life, but few of them hit me in the heart as much as MIDDLEWEST."
—JEFF LEMIRE

"Compelling, thought-provoking and enchanting"
—IMPULSE GAMER

"I was sucked in from page one and couldn't put it down."
—MARK WAID

AVAILABLE NOW

SKOTTIE YOUNG JORGE CORONA

image

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SKOTTIE YOUNG

is the *New York Times*-bestselling, Eisner Award-winning creator best known for his art in Marvel's *Wizard of Oz* graphic novels, his writing and art in *Rocket Racoon*, his illustration work for Neil Gaiman's *Fortunately, The Milk*, and his Young Marvel variant covers. For Image Comics, Skottie created, wrote, and illustrated the widely popular series I HATE FAIRYLAND and recently finished writing MIDDLEWEST, another collaboration with Jorge Corona. Skottie lives in Kansas City, Kansas with his wife, two boys, and a very large dog.

JORGE CORONA

is an Eisner Award-nominated, Russ Manning Award-winning sequential artist, writer, and illustrator. He is best known for his work on *We Are Robin*, *Nightwing*, and *The Flash* for DC comics and *Big Trouble in Little China*, *Adventure Time Comics*, and *Jim Henson's The Storyteller* for BOOM! Studios. For Image Comics, in addition to his work on MIDDLEWEST with Skottie, Jorge cocreated GONERS and NO. 1 WITH A BULLET alongside writer Jacob Semahn. Originally from Venezuela, Jorge currently lives in Denver, Colorado with his wife and fellow artist Morgan Beem.

JEAN-FRANCOIS BEAULIEU

is an acclaimed comics colorist with a bright and exciting palette. He is widely regarded as one of the industry's top colorists and has worked on countless properties for Image, Marvel, DC, Dark Horse, and more. He is also a longtime close collaborator with Skottie.

NATE PIEKOS

is an award-winning comics letterer and the founder of Blambot.com. He has created some of the industry's most popular fonts, and has provided lettering and design for virtually every major comics publisher. His book THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO COMIC BOOK LETTERING is forthcoming from Image Comics in October 2021.

Rated M / Mature

MEPHISTO